

1 CLAIMS:

2 1. A vertebral disk stabilizer for allowing adjacent vertebrae to flex forwardly and
3 extend rearwardly comprising:

4 a first vertebral bracket having a vertebrae contact side, an opposing interlocking
5 side, a front end, a rear end, and an attachment plate for attachment to a first of said
6 adjacent vertebrae;

7 a second vertebral bracket having a vertebrae contact side, an opposing
8 interlocking side, a front end, a rear end, and an attachment plate for attachment to a
9 second of said adjacent vertebrae; and

10 a separate intervertebral disk member having a front end and a rear end and only
11 one interlocking member on said front end of said disk member interlocking said
12 interlocking side of said first vertebral bracket at said front end of said first vertebral
13 bracket with said front end of said disk member and only one interlocking member on
14 said rear end of said disk member interlocking said interlocking side of said second
15 vertebral bracket at said rear end of said second vertebral bracket with said rear end of
16 said disk member.

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18 2. The stabilizer of claim 1 further comprising:

19 a supplemental compression member disposed between said interlocking side of
20 each of said first and said second vertebral brackets.

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1 3. The stabilizer of claim 2 wherein said supplemental compression member is
2 selected from the group consisting of a compression spring, a leaf spring, and a
3 compression plug.

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5 4. The stabilizer of claim 1 wherein said interlocking member on each of said front
6 end and said rear end of said disk member is selected from the group consisting of a rib, a
7 groove, a ball, a socket, and a bearing element.

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9 5. The stabilizer of claim 4 wherein said interlocking member on said disk member
10 cooperates with a complimentary interlocking member on said front end and said rear end
11 of each of said vertebral brackets, said complimentary interlocking member is selected
12 from the group consisting of a rib, a groove, a ball, a pocket, and a bearing element.

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